

**Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign
Summary of Major Accomplishments
2003 - 2004**

- 1) Continued the weed educational program in several Idaho school districts by distributing 700 Idaho Invasive Weeds Toolkits to teachers. These toolkits were disbursed by Idaho Ag in the Classroom, Idaho Rangeland in the Classroom, CWMA's, County Weed Superintendents, state and federal agencies and private landowners (700 total). IWAC is currently revising the toolkits to target three levels of education: 1) elementary 2) middle school 3) high school-adult.
- 2) Established a knowledge threshold for media, government and private entities related to weed control education in Idaho:
 - Worked closely with the Fish and Game to develop education materials to be placed into the Sportsman's Access Guide, Big Game Regulations, Upland Game Bird Regulations, Waterfowl Regulations, Fishing Regulations, Turkey Regulations & Controlled Hunt Information. Approximately 1.6 million Idahoans can be reached through these publications.
 - Developed a partnership with the Fish & Game to have a sign made on Eurasian watermilfoil and how to clean boats, trailers and watercraft. Focused the message on how to avoid spreading the aquatic weed.
 - Worked closely with the Dept. of Parks & Recreation to have noxious weed materials included in their mailings. Parks & Rec. also donated to the 2003 Fall Outreach Program (see attached)
 - Drafted and sent over 25 press releases and 6 editorials to the Associated Press for release in Idaho.
 - Helped publicize weed projects by coordinating media relations for counties and their weed control efforts.
 - Established a website for Weed Awareness & Education (www.idahoweedawareness.org)
 - Coordinated news stories with news channels 7 & 6 on the impacts of Eurasian watermilfoil in the Payette Lake and other regions of Idaho.
 - Conducted several radio interviews on press releases pertaining to noxious weeds in Idaho.
 - Completed four 1-minute radio commercials on how to avoid spreading noxious weeds.
 - Met with Regional CWMA's and County Weed Superintendents to strategize planning for media campaigns in their regions.
 - Shot a commercial with Senator Larry Craig on the impacts of noxious weeds to Idaho. Shot two more commercials on ATV Use and how to "Clean your Machine" and on purchasing noxious weed free forage and straw for pack animals.
 - Established partnerships with County Weed Superintendents and met with various county commissioners to obtain funding.
 - Have taken several phone calls and directed them to the "weed experts" from our commercial hotline number 1-866-IDWEEDS.

- Completed a 4th Grade Noxious Weed Bookmark Contest and mailed it out to 1,380 4th grade classrooms (27,000 students). Bookmarks will be judged at the Idaho Weed Conference in February of 2004.
- Disbursed Landowner Responsibility materials to 4,000 private landowners through the IRRC's mailings.

Current Progress

The Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign has developed a marketing plan for 2003-2004: In this marketing plan, the IWAC is targeting hunters/sportsmen/recreationalists in the fall of 2003. The following is the Outreach program for the fall of 2003:

Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign 2003 Hunter/Sportsman Outreach Program

The 2003 Hunter/Sportsman Outreach Program has two broad goals:

1. To create a strong public awareness foundation with Idaho hunters/sportsmen about the overall problem of noxious weeds and their direct effect on Idaho.
2. To enlist the support of Idaho hunters/sportsmen by providing a visual frame of reference so they can better identify particularly critical noxious weeds; know what actions they should take when they locate noxious weed infestations; and how they personally can help in the prevention of further infestations of noxious weeds.

The Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign seeks to make noxious weeds a front burner, top of the mind issue with Idaho hunters/sportsmen in the fall of 2003. That, in turn, enormously enhances the broader understanding of the noxious weed problem in Idaho and establishes a more receptive climate for legislative or other programmatic possibilities.

To create a successful Campaign program, the budget for the fall of 2003 will need to meet \$25,000 in funding for areas outside of the Treasure Valley Area (Ada County has dedicated \$10,000 for the Treasure Valley Area for the fall of 2003). The media division of spending would be: TV – 70%; Newspaper – 20%; and Radio – 10%.

The program would utilize television, newspaper and radio as its message medium and would center on a general theme of “Idaho’s Most Wanted” noxious weeds.

The preponderance of funding would go to television because the visual element of TV is head and shoulders above print and radio in this type of public education and outreach effort. The ability for individuals to “see” the noxious weed carries a multifaceted learning and understanding effect simply not possible in other mediums

- **Television – 70%.** The TV element would use: 30 commercials airing on TV stations in Spokane, Lewiston, Boise, Twin Falls and Idaho Falls markets. These commercials would feature video of ATV use and noxious weeds (Cleaning you Machine), particularly critical noxious weeds that devastate wildlife habitat like Yellow starthistle, and the

importance of using noxious weed free forage and straw for pack animals. The thrust would be to help hunters/sportsmen know what to look for and then what to do and who to contact if they discover outbreaks of the particular noxious weed. Helping them understand that preventing the spread of noxious weeds is important to the future of Idaho's wildlife would be another theme used.

The commercials would air in the five TV markets starting in September and running through November. Because of the Campaign's non-profit status, each purchased commercial results in a "one free for one paid" situation where the effective cost of the commercials is cut in half. The southwestern Idaho element would be completely funded with the donation from the Ada County weed group. The remaining dollars would come from the Awareness Campaign and private funding (ie: Dept. of Parks & Rec).

- **Newspapers – 20%.** The newspaper element would use display ads running in daily newspapers in Moscow, Lewiston, Boise, Twin Falls and Idaho Falls. These would be striking "Most Wanted" poster type of ads highlighting specific noxious weeds. The ads would be published on a regular basis approximately twice a month during the times when Idahoans are most likely to be out of doors and likely to encounter noxious weeds.
- **Radio – 10%.** The radio element is the least effective segment of the campaign when it comes to specific weeds, but can be highly effective in educating the public about the general problem of noxious weeds. The radio commercials would air throughout the fall in key radio markets in the Lewiston Moscow area, the Treasure Valley, Magic Valley and Eastern Idaho. These ads also would greatly help sensitize hunters/sportsmen to the TV and newspaper ads, which would be appearing at the same time.

Other donations from interested partners or supporters will be sought. The funds provided by them would specifically be dedicated to enhancing broadcast or print schedules around the region or in specific geographical regions if desired.

Active partnerships with TV and print news media outlets in the various regions would be pursued established and exploited. This "partnership" approach with the news media opens the door to a variety of news and public affairs programs, which could be done about weeds at no cost to the Weed Awareness Campaign. These "talk show" public affairs programs could add a great deal of free airtime to the campaign, which would greatly compound its reach and effectiveness. It also creates the environment in which respect news media personalities can become in effect public spokespersons for the noxious weed campaign.

It is anticipated that this campaign will also generate additional opportunities to reach the public through speaking engagements and would set the stage for educational opportunities within the Idaho public schools system.

The materials generated for this campaign would also be appropriate for inclusion and/or use by the Weed Awareness web site.

Future Progress

The IWAC will continue to focus on targeted themes. For the winter of 2003-2004 the IWAC will focus on getting the message out to elected officials and in the spring of 2003 to landowners (public and private).